A Summons TO THE GRAVE

OR.

The Neceſſity of a Timely Preparation for DEATH.

Demonſtrated in a

SERMON

Preached at

The FUNERAL of that moſt Eminent and Faithful Servant of Jeſus Chriſt Mr. JOHN NORCOT.

Who Departed this Life *March* 24. 16[illegible]

By *BENJAMIN KEACH*, a Cordial and [illegible] unfeigned Lover of the Deceaſed.

MIC. 7.2. *The good man is Periſhed out of the Earth.*

LONDON,

Printed for *Ben. Harris* at the *Stationers* [illegible] *Sweethings Rent* [illegible] *Royal Exchange*.

Received Dec. 14, 1917.

To all Sincere Christians that were the Hearers of this Sermon, but more especially to the poor, afflicted, and sorrowful Congregation which is in God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, meeting in Old Gravel-Lane *near* Wapping, *London.*

WHEN I think of that Separation Death hath made between you and your beloved Pastor (my dear Brother) it causes sadness to seiz my spirit; Sure, such Stroaks of the Almighty should bring us upon our Knees; I wish you are not hereafter made more sensible of the Nature of these sore Rebukes, then at present you can be; however let us learn this Lesson by it, not to overprize or value any thing or Person short of Jesus Christ; 'Tis good in all things to labour against inordinateness of affection; We can't, 'tis true, love God too much, nor Christ too much, but we may love Ministers too much, nay, idolize them, esteem them above what is meet, as many in former times have done, or we may esteem them not enough; whether any of you have bin guilty herein or no, which now I am perswaded be discovered; if duty to God

...mn Vow and Covenant with God and the ...urch, and our Love to Jesus Christ, will not make ... to know and keep our Places, what may we judge ... of our selves, or others judge of us: I am not without fears I speak of some in respect of temptations of this kind, I pray God deliver them from it, lest they bring up a reproach upon the good ways of God; You had or would be looked upon all of you, to have a real and cordial love for him that is now taken from you, O then do nothing after his death that would have grieved his soul were he alive; Labour to live in love, and strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; I having this opportunity, thought it not amiss to give a hint or two of this Nature

And now beloved, as concerning this Sermon, had it not been Preached in part to fulfil the desire of the deceased, I should not have presumed to have taken so weighty a work upon me, especially in the Presence of so many able and worthy Ministers, as I am not so, (the Lord knows, I look upon my self no ways meet, or fitly qualified and capacitated for such a weighty work I am called to) And truly, brethren, 'tis not any excellency and worth that is in this broken Sermon that is the cause of its Publication, 'tis the desire and importunity of several amongst you, and some others, that hath brought it forth; I do think, nevertheless, for the sake of him at whose Desire and at whose Funeral it was Preached, you will entertain it though never so poor and mean a work.

I told you what sorrow had seized my spirit, I preached

Preached with a heavy heart, and with a mournful spirit, I know you sate under the hearing of it; alas, I cannot blame you for your mourning, he was a most sweet and choice Preacher, most extellent skill had he to dive into Gospel-Mysteries; he saw, if I may say without offence, as far into a Text of Scripture, as most men now surviving, and as careful in dividing of the Word that every one might have a portion in season; O how sweetly has this Trumpet sounded in your ears, what spiritual joy hath it raised in your hearts! O how powerful in Prayer hath he been! Hath not his prayers and Tears over sinking sinners, tended to melt their Adamant hearts! O the thronging there hath been about him, no marvel he had precious bread always to break unto the children; he knew how to feed with milk, and how and when to feed with strong meat; It was his delight, I am satisfied, to do his Masters work, and in doing of it, I may say, he loved not his life unto the death.

He is gone to eat the fruit of his labour, and I wish, that all those Choice Sermons you have heard from his lips may not be buried with him, I hope the fruit of them will be seen in your lives; and could some of them be made publick, they might be very serviceable unto the People of God and others in general. I shall at present say no more, but earnestly desiring the Lord to continue the Labourer you have, and send some other in due time amongst you, to the making up that great loss which at present you

do

sustain, so that sinners may be in the midst of you converted, and true believers strengthned, encouraged and comforted, and all built up together in love, to the end that you may be found without blemish in the day of Jesus Christ, and that it may be so, is the desire, and shall be the Prayer of him

Who is willing to serve you to his Power, for Christ and his Truths sake,

BENJAMIN KEACH.

To the READER.

Impartial Reader,

SUpposing thee to be One that was not at this late Funeral; *or if thou wert there, couldst not have the opportunity to hear the Sermon (by reason of the straightness of the place, and the multitude of People) and perceiving it is partly for thy sake, the Printing of it has bin so much desired, I thought it might not be unnecessary to offer a word or two briefly unto thee, whether it deserves such a Publication or not, it will come now under thy Censure; however, if thou knowest the Person that taught it, I am satisfied, thou wilt not lose thy expectation, nothing excellent thou dost expect, considering the weakness and shallowness of the Preacher, how shouldst thou; yet if thou hast nothing of Prejudice in thy heart against him, from that contemnable apprehensions thou and others have of that he is not wholly without hopes, but that some small profit thou mayst gain hereby; Let the consideration of the subject prevail upon thee, however to give it the reading; 'tis, you hear, a Summons to the Grave; thou canst never hear too often of death; and sure this Sermon will not offend thee, if thou art one that dost live,*

I mean, live indeed, in the ſight and ſtedfaſt belief of a future life, an eternity of happineſs or miſery; I have read, that Philip *King of* Macedon, *commanded one of his Pages to awake him every Morning and call aloud to him,* Sir, remember you are a man: *This great Monarch did not diſdain to be rouzed every day from ſleep with the News of death, though it was but by the Mouth of his poor ſorry Page, and ſhall any of us ſlight the Meſſage, through want of affection to the Meſſenger; but perhaps, thou mayſt be one that likes neither, may be thou doſt not care to hear of the tidings of dying, and art ready to judge them melancholy fools that break their ſleep about it; Thoſe who are indeed prepared for it, have no cauſe to be diſquieted in thoughts of it; but what wilt thou do when death comes, that haſt a guilty conſcience; have you not heard of that poor ſoul, who cried out in horrour and diſtreſs of ſpirit upon his death-bed,* O what ſhall I do, I am ſo ſick that I cannot live, and yet ſo unprepared that I dare not die: *Remember, that the thoughts of death, when it comes, will abate thy courage, 'twill make the proudeſt heart to ſtoop; 'Tis a pretty Paſſage that I remember of a certain King of* Hungary, *who being on a time very ſad, his Brother (a Jolly Courtier) would needs know what ailed him.* O Brother *(ſaid he)* I have bin a great ſinner againſt God, and I know not how to die, nor appear before God in Judgment; *Theſe are (ſaid his Brother) melancholy thoughts, and withal made a jeſt at them; the King replied nothing for the preſent but the cuſtom of the Countrey was, that if the Execu-*

tioner came and sounded his Trumpet before any mans door, he was presently to be led out to the Place of Execution; the King in the dead time of the Night, sends the Headsman to sound his Trumpet before his Brothers door, who hearing it, and seeing the Messenger of death, springs in pale and trembling into the Kings Presence, beseeching him to tell him wherein he had offended; O Brother (replied the King) you have never offended me, and is this Executioner so dreadful, and shall not I that have greatly and grievously offended God, fear to be brought before the Judgement Seat of Christ; Death amazes none more when it comes, as it doth them who think not of it; the Egyptians used to carry about the Table a Deaths Head at their Feasts; 'tis good in the midst of all our delights and enjoyments, to be put in minde of the Grave; And if this Sermon spake no more powerfully to thee then a Deaths-Head to awaken thee, it may be worth thy Pains to read it, God may bless weak endeavors to great advantage; Jesus Christ could make five Barley loaves and two Fishes to feed five thousand men, and yet the fragments that were left might satisfie many a poor hungry soul: what though thou art afterly served, God can heat it by his Spirit, God can make it wholesom food for thy soul: if thou hast but an appetite I do not much fear thy relishing of it, for though the full stomack loaths the Honey-comb, yet to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

But because I would not weary thee, I shall only now give thee a summary Account of the particular things

insisted upon, and then commit thee to God.

1. *Thou hast the certainty of Death amplified, or briefly enlarged upon.*

2. *Some awaking Considerations and Motives to a speedy and effectual Preparation for it.*

3. *Several Directions and Cautions in order to it.*

4. *You have dying Ministers lamented, or several sad grounds of Lamentation upon that account.*

5. *Then fifthly and lastly, you have comfort against Death, or how true Christians may stay and support themselves in the hour of death, or in parting with godly relations: and because nothing is more effectual in order to this, then that comfortable assurance of present enjoyment, or being with Christ at that very instant, when the breath leaves us; something was offered to confirm the souls immortality, it was but a little which was said, had it been more it would not have bin too much: It was not delivered as it is matter of controversie, to grieve any who are differently perswaded: but as 'tis matter of comfort, suiting with the occasion, that so sorrowful spirits might be consolated, having for several years found the usefulness and sweetness of the doctrine under the like dispensation my self: What is more plainly laid down in holy Scripture then this: and those Arguments that so much establish me in the belief hereof are many, one is taken from our Saviours own words, Because man cannot kill the soul* Mat. 10.28. *If men cannot kill it then 'tis not mortal: As also the consideration of its nature being spirit, might I not reason thus, If the noble part of man sometimes called*

ſoul be ſpirit, then 'tis immortal: but 'tis called ſpirit in ſeveral places: and again, doth not the name of ſpirit declare its nature: a ſpirit in its nature is inviſible, and its very eſſence is life, if it ſhould ceaſe to live, it would be ſpirit no more. Thirdly, the Scripture ſhews, that at death the body goes one way, and the ſpirit goes another, namely, to God that gave it: we may judge alſo of the nature of the ſpirit or ſoul of man, if we conſider how nothing but God himſelf can ſatisfie it, lives upon divine and immortal food, and therefore ſure muſt be of like nature: what does ſhew more clearly that our bodies are earthy, or made of earth, as the conſideration of their being fed, and ſuſtained from the earth, ſo ſay I on the contrary hand in reſpect of the ſoul; 'tis fed with ſpiritual and immortal food, ergo ſuch is its nature; but not to trouble you with things of this kinde further, Reader, let it be thy chief care to prepare for thy eternal ſtate, for be ſure it will be but a little while, and thou wilt find either to thy everlaſting joy and comfort, or elſe to thy everlaſting woe and ſorrow: the truth of this doctrine of the Souls Immortality, and the effects thereof; And that this broken Sermon may prove, through Gods bleſſing, ſome ways for thy Souls advantage and profit, is the ſincere deſire of

Thy Affectionate and Cordial
Friend and Servant in
the Lord Jeſus

B. K.

An ELEGY on the Death of that moſt Laborious and Painful Miniſter of the Goſpel Mr. JOHN NORCOT, *who fell aſleep in the Lord the 24th of this inſtant* March 167¼.

HOW doth my troubled Soul amuſed ſtand,
On thoughts of God's moſt ſore Chaſtiſing (hand
Let Heaven aſſiſt my Pen, and help indite
This Mournful Elegy I'm mov'd to write.
My grieved heart knows not what way to take,
Its love to ſhew and lamentation make.
David for *Jonathan* was ſore diſtreſt,
And in like ſort has ſorrow ſeiz'd my Breaſt,
Beloved *John* is gone, dear *Norcot*'s dead;
That *Man of God*, who hath ſo often fed
Our precious Souls with Manna from above:
Whoſe powerful preaching did ingage our love
To *Jeſus Chriſt*. O! he had care and skill
To feed poor ſouls, and do his Maſter's will.
But is he from us alſo took away,
What, breach ſtill upon breach! Lord *Jeſus* ſtay
Thy hand ſuch ſtroaks are hardly born,
Here's cauſe for hundreds to lament and mourn.
The loſs is great the Churches do ſuſtain,
Poor ſinners too like cauſe have to complain.
There's few like him ſurviving to arouſe
Their ſluggiſh ſouls out of their ſinful drouſe.
They now may ſleep ſecure and not awake,

Until

Until they fall into the *Stygian Lake.*
This Golden Trumpet's ſtopt, 'twill ſound no more,
To warn them of what danger's at their door.
To win ſinners to Chriſt he did not ſpare
His ſtrength nor time, thought nothing was too dear
To part withall, if any wayes he might,
Their Souls turn from falſe ways unto the right,
Like as a Candle which much light doth give,
Doth waſt it ſelf, whilſt from it we receive
Much benefit; ſo did he clearly burn,
To the waſting of himſelf unto the urn.
This godly Preacher in a little ſpace.
Much work did do, he ſwiftly run his race;
With's might perform'd what e'r he found to do.
God graciouſly did bleſs his work alſo,
Yea few (I think) have had the like ſucceſs,
In turning ſinners unto righteouſneſs.
O were the worth of this good man but known,
It might produce an univerſal groan.
Let Brethren dear of different minds lament,
For he for you in prayers much time has ſpent;
He lov'd you all, though I have cauſe to fear,
The like affection ſome did ſcarcely bear.
'Twould pierce ones heart to think in ſuch a time,
Obedience unto Chriſt ſhould be a crime:
Or that offence ſhould in the leaſt be took,
'Cauſe from Gods word he durſt not turn nor look.
He would own nought but what *thus ſaith the Lord,*
Add would not he nor miniſh from Gods Word.

Come

Come let us live in love, we ſhall agree,
When at his Port we all arrived be,
Let ſinners mourn, who ſhall their loſs repair,
Who for their Souls ſo naturally did care.
Well may ye fear God will proclaim new wars,
When he calls home his choice Embaſſadors.
What may *Sodome* look for from above,
When ſuch who ſtood i'th' gap, God doth remove.
O tremble City, what is God about,
Look for new flames, thy *Lots* are calling out.
And now chaſtized flock a word or two,
I've double ſorrow when I think of you.
When that the Harveſt doth for Reapers call,
To loſe your Labourer, this wound's not ſmall.
O who ſhall bear the burthen of the day,
If God doth take the Labourers thus away.
When Pylots dye, how ſhall the Seamen ſtear,
'Mongſt Rocks and Sands, when ſtorms alſo appear.
Have we not cauſe to think the crafty Fox,
We'l out abroad and play upon the flocks.
And Ravening Wolves alſo will grow more bold,
And ſcare ſome ſilly Lambs out of the fold.
If God proceed to call the Shepherds home,
O what will of ſo many flocks become.
Ith' midſt of all, in this doth comfort lie,
The chiefeſt Shepherds lives when others dye.
And he be ſure who for the Sheep did bleed,
Will ſtick to them in times of greateſt need.
Come ceaſe your grief, don't you know very well,
The care God has on his own *Iſraell*.

And its no more which now is come to pass,
Then what by you some time expected was.
And what is done is but our Fathers will,
Therefore be silent every one be still:
For should we yield to passion I have fears,
We should grieve Christ and wound our Souls with
(tears.
The narrow Sluces too of dribling eyes,
Would be too streight for those great Springs that rise.
But since our Vessels fills up to the top.
Lets empty them, for every sin a drop.
For if lets wish we were compos'd of Snow,
Instead of flesh, yea made of Ice, that so
We might in sense of sin and its loathing,
Melt with hot love to Christ, yea, thaw to nothing.
And should our sins deprive our Souls of him,
Let tears run from our Eyes till Couches swim.
Yet let's not grudge him that most happy bliss,
Who now in glory with Christ Jesus is.
He did his work apace, his Race is run,
He as touch'd the Gole, yea, and the Prize hath won.

AN EPITAPH.

A Sweet and Godly Preacher doth lie here,
Who did his Master Jesus love so dear;
And Sinners Souls, that he his strength
did spend.
And did thereby (tis thought) hasten his end,
He brought himself by Preaching to the Grave,
The Precious souls of Sinners for to save.
He lies but here asleep, he is not dead:
To God he lives, to Christ his Soul is fled,
And o're a while must he awake again,
And evermore with Christ in Glory raign.

 By *B. K.*

Another Elegiack POEM *by a Young Man that dearly loved him.*

WAves upon Waves, Methinks, begins to roule,
Some ſtrange Alarm afflicts my troubled ſoul,
VVhich grieves my heart, by ſounding in mine Ears
And makes my Eyes to flow in Britiſh tears.
VVhat Tragedy is this: Death hold thy hand,
VVhy, muſt the good man periſh from the Land.
Is *NORCOT* dead, ſuffer me then to mourn,
For now he's gone, but never will return.
Oh father father, whither doſt thou fly,
And leave my ſoul, in this perplexity.
And if that I dear Lord muſt ſtay behind,
A portion of his Spirit let me find.
Oh ſend thy Spirit now into my heart
That it may Goſpell grace, to me Impart
And that it may, likewiſe anoynt mine Eyes,
For to Conceave thoſe glorious miſteries.
Of thy moſt ſacred Kingdom, heaven above,
VVhere *NORCOT* s ſwallowed, in Eternal Love.
Faith Love and Zeal, did his brave Soul adorn,
And this did manifeſt, he was new born.
NORCOT (a Boanerges) was Indeed
Could make the hearts, of ſturdy ſinners Bleed.
And yet an Evangelicus, did prove
VVith Soveraign Balm of ſweet Goſpell Love.

Great

Great reverence dear ſoul, he uſed to Bear
To things that ſacred, and Cœleſtial were.
Oh with what gravity and Zeal did he
Declare to ſinners their ſad miſery.
In Praying Preaching, Chriſt alone he Eyed,
And when he had done, the will of God he dyed.
A Panegyrick, I do not intend
Neither with *Paraſites*, for to Contend.
Yet much as to his Vertues, I might ſay
Did I not know, the humors of the day.
Doubtleſs on whom. God honour doth confer,
In our affections we highly ſhould prefer.
Dear *NORCOT*'s gone, that worthy man of God,
Lord this aloud; beſpeaks our Ichabod.
My Soul Ceaſe for to mourn, he is not dead,
He into Everlaſting Bliſs is fled.
VVhole troops of Angels, did his ſoul attend,
VVhen he to Jeſus Chriſt, did it commend.
He now is ſwallowed up, in Glory above,
Embrac'd in Arms of Everlaſting love:
And now dear ſoul he's gone, his race is run,
And faithfully his Fathers work he hath done.
The veil of Enmity hath been removed,
He conld not love more then he is Beloved.
The veil of Blindneſs, that is ta'en away,
And now with his dear ſoul 'tis perfect day.
The veil's Removed he ſeeth, as he is ſeen,
And praiſeth him that did his ſoul Redeem.
He now ſings *Hallelu*jahs heavenly hymnes,
Amongſt Cœleſtiall glorious Seraphims.

He hath fought the Fight, the Crown hath gain'd,
Yea, and to perfect Visions hath attain'd;
And you his Mourners here, the Word doth say.
The Righteous from bad times are snatch'd away;
A Prince and a great man you all can tell
This day is fallen in our *Israel.*
Oh *Israel* mourn, thy Chariots flee away,
Thy *Horsemen* leave thee in an evil day,
The Godly fail, and ceaseth for to be,
Lord, is not this for our iniquity?
Let's tremble then, black Clouds hang o're our heads,
Whilst we securely lie upon our Beds:
Rouse, roule my soul for shame, what sleepy still,
Hast thou not of luke-warmness had thy fill?
Heark, dost not hear the Bridegroom very nigh,
Oh then, by faith, thy self to him apply:
Get oyl, more oyl, thy heart to purifie,
For now, methinks, I hear a louder cry,
Thousands there are which to the forme attain'd
Of Godliness, yet without grace remain'd:
They cry and howl, *Lord, Open Heavens Gate,*
But he saith, *No, you now are come too late.*
Oh *Norcot, Norcot,* if it were but free
To envy any, I would envy thee,
Because thou now invested art with glory,
Whilst I behind do write this mournful story.
But stay my soul, pray why so passionate grown,
Wilt thou not suffer him to reap his own?
He sowed in tears, but now he reaps in joy,
Don't then by murmuring thy self annoy;

Must

Muſt he all day be labouring in the Field,
And now 'tis night, doſt grudge him Reſt to yield:
Rather lament and mourn for thy own ſin,
And that's the way for thee to follow him;
Doſt hear him call, *Mourn for thy ſelf, not me,*
I from Death, Sin, and Sickneſs now am free.
Farewel, bleſt Saint, farewel; thou art fled away,
And left us in a black and ſtormy day;
And yet we hope to ſee thy face again,
That ſo with thee in glory we may reign.

ACROSTICK.

I s Norcot *dead? (No) he is fallen aſleep,*
O h *then my ſoul, ceaſe to lament and weep;*
H e *now in Glory clearly doth behold*
N ought *elſe but Joys that never can be told:*

N ever *more grieve for him: what is thy loſs,*
O 'tis *his gain, for he hath left but droſs.*
R epent, *oh* England, *I filled am with fears,*
C ompel *me not to mix my thoughts with tears.*
O Goſpel-Grace *will haſten, if you ſcoff,*
T o *a Nation bringing forth the fruit thereof.*

E.P.

AN EPITAPH on his *Tomb-ſtone.*

HEre underneath this Stone lieth the Duſt
Of NORCOT; *whilſt the Riſing of the Juſt.*
His Soul to Heaven is fled, and there doth ſtand
With Chriſt and all the Saints at his Right Hand.
And when on Earth he was, he did not ſpare
His Life for Chriſt, it was his daily care,
To Pray and Preach, and unto God to crave,
That Sinners might repent their ſouls to ſave;
His Work was done, his Glaſs is run, and we
May all conclude he's Bleſt t'Eternitie.

B. H.

A

SERMON

eached at the Funeral of

Mr. *JOHN NORCOT*,

March the 28*th*. 1676.

I Need not tell you the ground and occaſion of this preſent Meeting; Certain I am this is a ſorrowful Aſſembly: Whether I am fit to preach or no I cannot tell, but ſure I am ripe to mourn. May I not on this occaſion uſe the words of *David* upon *Abner*'s death, 2 *Sam.* 3. 38. *Know ye not that there is a Prince and a great man fallen this day in Iſrael?* Who

more worthy of honour than thoſe God confers honour upon (and to be employed as Chriſts Embaſſadors) to treat in his ſtead with poor ſinners aboue their eternal eſtate and condition, is no ſmall dignity; and to be deprived of ſuch a one, what greater ground for grief and mourning? But not to take up your time in a way of Introduction, I ſhall commend to you that portion of holy Scripture, which ſhall be the ground of my preſent diſcourſe;

Pſal. 89. 48. *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death? Shall he deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave? Selah.*

The Pſalmiſt in the verſes that doth precede is pleading with God under great afflictions and the hidings of Gods face, upon conſideration of the ſhortneſs of his dayes: *How long wilt thou hide thy ſelf? for ever*

ever ſhall thy wrath burn like fire? and vet. 47. *Remember how ſhort my time is*; as if he ſhould ſay, Lord I have but a little while to live, my time on earth is ſhort; let me therefore enjoy thy favor: let the remainder of my dayes (the days of my pilgrimage) be good dayes: Let me ſee thy face, have the light of thy countenance; let them not be dayes of ſorrow and darkneſs. From hence note this, That a gracious ſoul, whilſt on earth, deſires nothing more than the enjoyment of Gods favor. Communion with God is the onely thing his ſoul longs and breaths after. They having a ſenſe of the ſhortneſs of their dayes, reſolve to live well and to make good improvement of their time: They would not onely have the full enjoyment of God hereafter, but a ſight of his preſence and favour whilſt here. And indeed thoſe who would live with God in heaven, muſt firſt live to God on earth. Now it is

not thus with the unregenerate, if wicked men have a ſight of the ſhortneſs of their lives, it hath not this effect upon their hearts; they many times the more purſue their luſts: they endeavor to get as much pleaſure as they can, and to gratifie their covetous, ambitious, and carnal appetites, and ſuck out what ſweetneſs they can out out of this periſhing world; they reſolve to have it as ſweet as outward enjoyments can make it; they know no higher or better good then what is earthly and ſenſual. Oh miſerable deceived Creatures, how is their underſtandings darkened, having never attained a ſaving knowledge of God, nor ſpiritual reliſh of his grace and love, nor a ſight of his favour and kindneſs towards them. They are dreadfully involved in Egyptian darkneſs, they are ignorant of the ſatisfaction, joy and ſweetneſs that is in him; hence they cry not after God, nor ſeek after him here, that they

they might be made happy with him hereafter.

But that I may come to the words that I have read to you, in the Text you have a twofold Interrogation or Negative Queſtions.

1. *What man is he that liveth and ſhall not ſee death?*

2. *Can he deliver his ſoul from the power of the grave? Selah.*

The meaning is no man can avoid it, none can eſcape the grave, whatever he be. Many ſuch kind of queſtions are put forth and thus anſwered in Holy Scripture. Here are two terms, before I proceed to any obſervation, that I judge needful to ſpeak to by way of Exp ication:

Firſt, What is meant by the word *ſoul* in this place? Doth the ſoul go to the grave? I anſwer, *Soul* in holy Scripture bears divers acceptations; ſometimes by it is intended one

one thing, ſometimes another; and from hence I judge it is, that ſo many perſons miſs in their underſtandings about the noble and ſuperiour part of the Creature.

1. By it is intended the whole man, *Gen.* 46. 27. *And the ſons of* Joſeph *which were born him in* Egypt, *were two ſouls; all the ſouls of the houſe of* Jacob, *which came into* Egypt, *were threeſcore and ten ſouls*; the like you have in *Acts* 7. 14. *And* Joſeph *called his father* Jacob *to him and all his kindred, threeſcore and fifteen ſouls*; that is ſo many perſons: in *Acts* 27. 37. all that were with *Paul* in the ſhip, are ſaid to be *two hundred and threeſcore and ſixteen ſouls.*

2. It is taken for the life of the body, *Pſal.* 7. 5. *Let the wicked perſecute my ſoul and take it, yea let him tread down my life upon the earth.*

3. It

3. It is taken for the affections, deſire, or heart of the Creature, 1 *Sam.* 1. 15. *And* Hannah *anſwered and ſaid, no my Lord, I am a woman of a ſorrowful ſpirit; I have drunk neither wine nor ſtrong drink, but have poured out my ſoul before the Lord.* And in chap. 18. it is ſaid, *the ſoul of* Jonathan *was knit to the ſoul of* David; that is, his affections were ſet and faſtened upon him. In many other places, by ſoul we find ſome one or more faculty of the ſoul is intended.

4. It is taken for the ſtomach, *Prov.* 27. 7. *The full ſoul loatheth an honey-comb, but to the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet.*

5. By it is meant oftentimes the noble and ſuperiour part of man, diſtinct from the body; for this ſee *Pſal.* 19. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul;* Mat. 10. 28. *Fear not them which can kill the body, but*

but are not able to kill the ſoul. But probably ſome may ſay, if the word ſoul hath ſo many various acceptations, how may we know when the ſpirit or principal part is in Scripture meant hereby. *Anſw.* I ſhall briefly lay down three or four Rules, whereby you may know:

1. When you read of ſoul, as that wherein couverſion is wrought, it can intend nothing elſe ſave the noble or immortal part; for Converſion is a change onely of the evil qualities of man's better or ſuperior part; *Pſal.* 19. 7. *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul.* Converſion to God changes not the defects and qualities of the outward man. If a man be attended with ſuch and ſuch a diſeaſe, or diſtemper before Converſion, he may be truly converted, and yet retain the ſame diſeaſes; the ſame lameneſs, blindneſs, deafneſs, crookedneſs, or what ever other blemiſh he may have of the like nature.

2. When

2. When you read of ſoul as that which rejoyceth in God, delights in God, longs and thirſts after God, lives and feeds upon God and Chriſt, and united to and hath communion with God, cloathed and adorned with the holy Spirit; it always holds forth the glorious ſpirit or ſoul of man? let me onely direct you to one or two Scriptures upon this account, *Luke* 1. 46. *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord and my ſpirit rejoyceth in God my Saviour*, Pſal. 94. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul.* Pſal. 42. 1, 2. *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God; my ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before him.* Pſa. 73. 26. *My heart and my fleſh faileth me, but God is the ſtrength of my ſoul, and my portion for ever.*

3. When you read of ſoul, as that which men cannot kill or deſtroy, is always intended this excellent part;

ſee *Matth.* 10. 28. *Fear not them that kill the body but cannot kill the ſoul.*

4. Laſtly, When you read of ſoul, as that which lives when the body dies, or is commended into the hands of God at death; you muſt alwayes take it in thoſe Scriptures for the ſame.

6. By ſoul ſometimes is meant only the body diſtinct from the ſpirit or immortal part; ſee *Joſh.* 10. 28, 37. *And the king thereof he utterly deſtroyed, and all the ſouls that were therein; and they ſmote the king thereof and all the ſouls that were therein*; and in this ſenſe ſoul is to be taken in this place. But that I may proceed, a word to explain the other term, to wit, *the hand of the grave.* By hand, beloved, often in Scripture is meant power, *Iſa.* 50. 2. *Is my hand ſhortned, that it cannot redeem?* that is, Have I loſt my power to redeem? ſo *Acts* 4. 3. My Text thus briefly opened, I ſhall proceed as moſt ſuiting with our preſent

ſent occaſion, to take notice of one Doctrinal Truth from the words; which take as followeth.

Doct. *That all men muſt die.*
Or thus, *That no man whatſoever, can eſcape the power of the grave.*

I ſhall, God aſſiſting, endeavor to demonſtrate and confirm the truth of this Propoſition. The holy Spirit doth not ſlightly paſs it by, but puts a *Remora* to it; *viz.* that Emphatical ſignal word *Selah*, which ſhews us that this word calls for meditation and our diligent attention; it doth lay a kind of an arreſt upon our ſpirits, not paſſing from it till we have ſeriouſly weighed the matter. *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death?* Death will be too hard for him, and too powerful to reſiſt; there is no withſtanding the ſtrength of this King, he will bring all into ſubjection: he is ſaid in *Rom.* 5. 12, 14. to reign over all, and ſo he is called the

terror of Kings as well as King of terrors, he is so to the wicked; and what King hath as many subjects as Death hath? And that I may demonstrate it, consider Age cannot rescue any man from the hand of Death; the oldest man must die. All those that lived before the Flood are dead. *Methuselah* lived nine hundred sixty nine years, *Gen.* 5. 27. but alas at last the words tell you, *and he died*; he lived near a thousand years, but at last was forced to subject to the grave.

2. As the oldest man must die, so must the strongest. *Sampson* was a mighty man, yet *Sampson* must die. Death will make the stoutest hearts to faint, and the strongest legs to tremble. One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet; his breasts are full of milk and his bones are moistned with marrow, *Job* 21. 23, 24. If any were likely to encounter or grapple with Death, we may suppose that this is the

the man; he who is in his perfect ſtrength, free from diſtempers; ſignified by that word, *wholly at eaſe and quiet*: yet alaſs all will not do, this man was forced to yield, he is made Deaths Captive.

3. The wiſdom and policy of man cannot deliver from the power of the grave. The wiſeſt prince that ever ſate upon a Throne was forced to ſtoop to the ſovereign hand of Death. *Wiſe men die*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *likewiſe the fool*, Pſal. 49. 10. *In death there is no remembrance of the wiſe more than the fool*, Eccl. 2. 16. The moſt grave and politick in all ages of the world, after all their famous and deep contrivances, have been overcome by death.

4. Riches cannot deliver from Death, if it could we ſhould have few rich men die; doubtleſs they would give their all to ſave themſelves from the grave: they would leave but little to Friends or Executors, could they but bribe Death with

with their Silver and Gold. I have read of one who would make a tryal, and ſo called for a Bag of Gold, when on a Sick-bed, and laid it to his trembling heart; but preſently cried out, *Away, away with it; it will not do.* Oh my Beloved, Riches will not avail you in the day of wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. and as it will not in the Day of Judgement, ſo it will not in the hour of Death. The brutiſh perſon dies and leaves his wealth behind him, *Pſal.* 49. 10. The Cardinal of *Wincheſter*, who procured the death of the good Duke of *Gloceſter* in the Reign of King *Henry* the Sixth, was ſhortly after taken with a grievous Diſeaſe; who underſtanding by his Phyſicians that he could not live, murmurring and repining thereat, he cried out, (*Fie*) *will not Death be hired? Will money do nothing, muſt I die, that have ſo great riches? If the whole Realm would ſave my life, either by policy I can get it, or by riches I can buy it.* But yet all would not do,

the

the proud Cardinal muſt ſubmit to death.

5. As Riches will not deliver from the power of the grave, ſo likewiſe earthly power and worldly ſovereignty and greatneſs, cannot do it; all the mighty Potentates and Monarchs, the holy Scripture and ancient Hiſtories acquaint us of, where are they? hath not Death ſubdued them all? After all their grandeur and pomp they were all cut down by Deaths all-conquering hand, and now their glory lies in the duſt. *Auguſtus Caſar* one day triumphs in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, the next day is ſtabbed to death with Bodkins. *Herod* King of the *Jews*, one hour is admired as a God, the next hour is made a Feaſt for Worms, *Acts* 12. 22, 23. The great Conqueror *Alexander*, who ſubdued the greateſt part of the World, is at laſt overcome by Death. Death makes no difference between the King in his Royalty on the Throne, and the

Beggar

Begger in Rags upon the Dunghill: *Alexander* having received 2 wounds at the ſiege of a great City in *India*, finding himſelf to be ſore wounded, was in ſome meaſure made ſenſible of his own fragility; and cried out to his flattering followers, *You call me the Son of* Jupiter, *but I perceive I am ſubject to wounds and death as well as other men.* Death bringeth down the loftieſt looks of man. I have read that in the Library of *Dublin* there is a Globe at the one end and at the other end the picture of Death, to ſhew that though man was Lord of the whole Univerſe, he muſt ſubmit to Death. Thus you ſee that all the pomp and glory of the world hath been cut down by the power of the grave. But again,

6. As Worldly Dignities cannot deliver from the power of the Grave, ſo glorious Titles will not do it.

Thoſe Worthies that God conferred glorious Titles upon, yea ſo far

as to give his own name unto them; to be called gods. One would think that this, if any were the most likeliest to exempt a man from the grave, and yet it will not do, *Psal.* 82. 6, 7. *I have said ye are gods*, but with the same breath adds, *ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.* But,

7. Eminency in grace and spiritual endowments, or divine qualifications, will not be able to rescue a soul from the power of the grave. All the Patriarchs of old they are gone; where are all those choice and renowned in grace that we read of, who shined in their day like the stars in the firmament? Oh! where are those Troops of Israelites that excelled in patience, chastity, temperance, holiness and humility? these could not deliver themselves from death. *The righteous perish, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away: none considering*

that the righteous are taken away from the evil to come, Isa. 57. 1.

8. Lastly, No spiritual Dignity, Office, or Place, can deliver from the hand of the grave; though a person be never so much in the favour of God, and honoured by Christ Jesus; though never so laborious for the good of souls, as to be an Embassador of Peace and Minister of the Gospel, yet these will not exempt from death: your Fathers where are they and the Prophets, do they live for ever? *Zech.* 1. 5.

Thus you have heard the Doctrine made good and confirmed, *That there is no man living that shall not see death, or be able to deliver himself from the power of the grave.* I shall onely give you two or three reasons of the point, and so proceed to the Application. If you question why all must die, take two or three things for an Answer.

1. *Reaſ.* Becauſe all have ſinned. Sin and Death came into the world together. Death came by the fall in the Garden, 'tis part of the puniſhment due to us for that tranſgreſſion; *Rom.* 5. 12. *Wherefore as by one man ſin entred into the world, and death by ſin, ſo death paſſed upon all men; for that all have ſinned; the wages of ſin is death*, Rom. 6. 23. We may cry out in the words of a holy man, *O ſin, ſin, 'tis thou which by thy juſt deſerts haſt cauſed all the funerals that ever have been.* Thus you ſee all muſt die, becauſe all have ſinned.

2. *Reaſ.* Becauſe God hath decreed that all men muſt die, *Heb.* 9. 27. *And as it is appointed for men once to die, and after that to judgement.* Though death be natural and the puniſhment of our ſins, yet we die by Gods appointment. We let in death by our ſin, and God cauſeth death to proceed upon us, to make

good the justice and severity of his own threatning. *I know*, saith *Job*, *thou wilt bring me to death, to the house appointed for all living*, Job 30. 23. *On the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return*; Gen. 2. 17. 3. 19.

3. *Reas.* Lastly, Why God will bring all men to the grave; and I shall add no more, Because he would thereby magnifie his glorious Attributes; as first one of infinite grace, commiseration and goodness, he brings his own children to the grave, knowing the miseries, sad afflictions and troubles that doth attend them in this life. Here most times poor Saints, with *Lazarus*, have their evil things; many are their afflictions, and this way God takes to deliver them out of them all. Death opens a door to glory to every gracious soul; and secondly God by death prepares the bodies of his Saints for

eternal

eternal bliſs and happineſs. He brings the body to the grave, that it may be purified and made a glorious and moſt amiable body; 'tis ſown, that it might be raiſed more glorious, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43, 44. God doth with the bodies of his Saints, with reverence be it ſpoken, as they do with their Earthen Veſſels in *China*, they bury them in the earth for many years, and when they take them out, the nature and worth of them is far tranſcendent. 2. The ungodly muſt die, that God may magnifie on them his own infinite Juſtice. Death having ſeized their body, their ſouls muſt go to its place, to ſuffer the intollerable pains and incenſed wrath of the Almighty; and that their bodies alſo, with their ſouls, when they ſhall hereafter meet together again, might be made fit fuel for eternal flames to kindle upon: for now as they are in this mortal ſtate they cannot endure the terrible wrath of God, but would ſoon

be freed of all bodily pain and extremity, were they cast into that Lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

Thus much for the Reasons of the Point; more might be said, but I must hasten to the application.

I have onely four Uses to make of it, as first an Use of Exhortation, secondly an Use of Direction, thirdly an Use of Lamentation, fourthly an Use of Consolation.

First, By way of Exhortation, Is it so Beloved, must all men die? Can none deliver his own soul from the power of the grave? Must every Mothers child of us take up our Lodging there? Is the dark grave the appointed house for all living? Shall the proudest and loftiest be brought down to the dust? Must that little cool house under ground hold us all? Then poor sinners shall

I prevail with you to prepare for death? Let me exhort you to look about you and get ready. I remember, when the Prophet came to good King *Hezekiah*, *Isa.* 38. 1. with that doleful tidings (as upon some consideration and circumstances it might then appear to that holy man) he bids him set his house in order, make provision for eternity: and this is the message that is brought to you this day: You must die and not live. And that I might enforce this word upon you, let me lay before you a few Motives and awakening Considerations.

First, Consider what a great favour and mercy it is that God hath let you and I live so long. Others are long ago cut down and sent to the grave; he hath not: it may be given many half of those dayes which thou hast had. Look upon this as a mercy indeed, considering thy life was forfeited before thou were born.

Sirs

Sirs we came into the World with the Sentence of death upon us; and if *Jehovah* had cut us down in our sins many years ago, it would have been but a piece of Justice. And what is the end of God in sparing of us, but that we might be fitted for the place whither we are going. Oh how unwilling is God to strike the fatal blow, to cut men down before they are prepared for death. He is not willing they should perish, and that is the reason of his patience, long-suffering, and forbearance, sinners lay it to heart.

Secondly, Consider what dreadful provocations you and I have given him to take us away, and command death in his name to arrest us. Have we not grieved, burdened, yea even wearied him with our iniquities? Nay, have we not pierced him? May he not cry out, as being pressed as a Cart is pressed that is full of sheaves, *Amos* 2. 13. Is it not a sad and most

lamenta-

lamentable thing, thus to deal with a loving and gracious God?

Thirdly, How often hath the Lord called you, and yet you have rebelled? Hath not he ſtretched out his hand all the day long, and yet you have not hearkned; but have rejected his counſel and caſt his word and reproofs behind you; yea, and often reſiſted his Holy Spirit in the common motions and workings thereof? Have you not many of you refuſed his Grace, Son, and divers ſweet and precious Calls and Offers of Love. And certain I am, you have had many of theſe in this place. Nay, how many warnings have you had of the near approach of death? Nay, awakening ſummons to prepare for the grave, as you would anſwer it before the dreadful Judge of Heaven and Earth; by my dear Brother that is fallen aſleep; whom we ſhall hear no more? Oh what pains did

he take with ſome of you, that ſo you might be ready? Have not you and I notwithſtanding all this hearkened to a baſe deceitful heart, and inticeing and tempting Devil? Have you ſtouted it out againſt all Pains and Endeavours uſed for Spiritual awakenings, and are you yet alive? Then conſider how much this calls upon you to be ready to die? Will any dare, that are ſenſible of the worth of their Immortal Souls, neglect this concern any longer?

4. Conſider, That the abuſe of Mercy and Goodneſs will greatly aggravate thy miſery in the day of wrath: Oh remember what it is to ſin againſt Light, Love, and Patience. Shall the goodneſs of God, that ſhould lead to repentance, encourage and harden thee in thy iniquity? How doſt thou think to eſcape the Judgement of God? Or *deſpiſeſt thou*, as ſaith the Apoſtle, *the riches of his goodneſs, forbearance and*

and long-ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance; but after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart treaſureſt up wrath againſt the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds, Rom. 2. 4, 5, 6. *Sentence is paſt againſt a ſinner, but becauſe it is not ſpeedily executed, therefore the hearts of men are fully ſet within them to do wickedly*, Eccl. 8. 11. Chriſt knocks at the door and yet ſinners will not hear: Chriſt may ſpeak of ſinners as God ſpeaks of *Iſrael* of old, *My people will have none of me*, Pſal. 81. 11. Oh what have you to anſwer for abuſed mercy and favour! What What will you do hereafter, when Chriſt, who waits upon you now to ſave you, will then turn his face from you in the day of your calamity, and plead againſt you to condemn you? ſee *Prov.* 1. 28.

5. Consider for Christs sake of those advantages you have had and still have: If some had the like, we may conclude they would have made better use and improvement of them then some of you have done. Hath not God afforded you the Gospel beyond what he hath to divers parts of the world? Nay, what a gracious and powerful ministration of it hath there been continued for some time in this place? You have had helps above thousands, God hath taken much pains with you that have attended upon the word here. Where God gives many talents, he requires the improvement of them; what will become of *Jerusalem* and *Capernaum* in the day of Judgement? And hath not Gods spirit striven with you also? Nay, and hath not Conscience endeavoured to awaken you? Have you not had Summons and Calls from thence? Hath not that often reproved

proved you for neglect of Seaſons, ſlighting of Sermons, and indulging your ſelves in iniquity and ſecret luſts and omiſſions of duty? Oh! how many ſharp checks and rebukes have you had from within? Nay, and beſides all this, what awakening Judgements to prepare for the grave, have you and I had; dreadful Plague, Fire and Sword: and what further means could God make uſe of in an ordinary way for allarming and ſtirring of us up to prepare for our change, aud turning of our ſouls to himſelf, and fitting of us for Eternity? And ſhall none of theſe work upon you? Shall all means fail? Shall the Goſpel be preached in vain? Shall Miniſters ſpend their ſtudy, their breath, nay their ſtrength, to no purpoſe: what will you do then in the end?

6. Do you know that you ſhall have all theſe helps continued to you?

you? Will God ſtill ſuffer his holy Spirit to ſtrive with you? Alaſs, Death may ſoon have Commiſſion to ſeize you and carry you into the other world; but ſhould you live, are you ſure God will ſtill wait upon you: upon ſuch rebels, who have ſlighted and undervalued his Grace, Son, and Goſpel? Sirs, I muſt tell you, alluding to that in *Geneſis 6.* which hath often been upon my heart; that the bleſſed Spirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man: Means and advantages are like to be taken away. God ere long may ſay to Conſcience, Be ſtill, reprove that man, that woman no more: You may be left to commit wickedneſs without remorſe or trouble. God may give you up to a hardened and ſordid heart, to a ſeared and filthy Conſcience, yea, and refuſe in mercy to afflict you any more; ſee *Hoſea 4. 14.* May not he that hath taken away a Miniſter, an able one, a ſweet and precious Labourer, take away

away ere long a ſweet and precious Goſpel; and what will become of your ſouls then?

7. Do you know for certain the Goſpel ſhall be continued to this Land? Be you ſure you ſhall hear the joyful ſound? Let me tell you my thoughts freely, though I pretend not to a ſpirit of Prophefie; yet mark what follows: I tremble to think what is coming upon us as a puniſhment of our ſins. I fear, Beloved, the Goſpel is a going. *Ephraim* hath grey hairs here and there, though he know it not; and grey hairs are a ſign that our morning or beſt days are gone; ſecondly, they commonly bring a wrinkled face, or a decay of Beauty; our goodneſs, like *Ephraims*, are even like the morning dew: thirdly, they bring feebleneſs, or a decay of ſtrength: fourthly, they ſhew that death and mortality draws near. We have heard, ſome of us, that he

he was grey a great while ago; I doubt he is white, by this time. There are ſad ſymptomes upon us, I *know* not how ſoon we may have cauſe to cry *Ichabod*, becauſe the glory is departed. Are we not in danger to be over-ſpread with Popery, Confuſion, and Darkneſs; for if the Goſpel ſhould continue, and Gods people reſolve to do their beſt, by their prayers and prizing of it, to hold it faſt; yet are you ſure you ſhall have Miniſters to preach unto you? Many have been taken of late away, and one at this time before your eyes is gone, a faithful and able one; whom now you ſhall hear no more. But ſhould there be Miniſters and opportunities, yet you may be left to your ſelves, to ripen for Hell and ruin? Nay, Is not Chriſt already crying over you, as he did over *Jeruſalem*; *Oh that thou hadſt known in this thy day the things that belongeth to thy peace; but now they are hid from*

thine

eyes; Luke 19. 42. Oh that these things might take hold and touch your Consciences.

8. Consider of the shortness and uncertainty of your dayes? Alas, what is your life, you know not how soon death may come and knock at your doors, or look in at your windows? It may be some of you have had many years, but this consider of, you know not how few the rest may be behind; you have no promise from God, no lease or assurance that you have one year more; where hath God told you that you shall? nay one half year? You cannot assure your self you shall have one month, no nor one week, no not one day. You may be stricken by death before you return home. *Boast not thy self of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*, Pro. 27. 1. Many that are young, hope that they may have many years; the child thinks to be

a youth, and the youth to be a man, and a man till he is full of dayes: But alaſs, they conſider not how brittle they are; they do not lay to heart the uncertainty of their lives. *David* deſired to know his end and the meaſure of his days, *that he might know how frail he was*, Pſal. 39. 4, 5. Many do not take a right meaſure of their dayes, they meaſure not by a lawful Rule. What ſay ſome, my Father and Grandfather lived to a good old age, and I hope to attain to their years. Others meaſure by their preſent health, they are not diſeaſed nor ſickly; but of a good healthful Conſtitution: but alaſs, this is no ſure Rule, thou mayeſt notwithſtanding all this be quickly in the grave; ſuch ſometimes death makes to ſtoop on a ſudden, they go many times before ſickly perſons. Others meaſure their dayes by their preſent ſtrength, they fear not death upon that account; yet

they

they die as you have heard; though wholly at ease: these do not go by the Kings Standard neither. Let me tell you what is a right and true measure for your dayes, account them then by the morning dew and flower of the field. *Man that is born of a woman*, saith holy *Job*, *is but of few dayes; he cometh forth like a flower and is cut down: and flieth away like a shadow and continueth not.* Job 14. 1, 2. Naturalists tells us of a plant that lasts but for a day, this plant thou or I may be. The Heathen hath observed that the Rose grows old in its very budding. Mankind is like *Jonah's* Gourd, that came up in a night and perished in a night. Nothing fades sooner than a flower, oh measure thy dayes by that and by the vapour that appeareth for a little while and then vanisheth away; the Spiders Web, the Swift Post, the Weavers Shuttle, or a Ship under sail. Persons never so rich or great, never so

beautiful, never so weak or strong, wise or foolish, vertuous or vicious, as thou hast heard, must die. May not the thoughts of this move thee to a preparedness for the grave?

2. Consider how you have loytered hitherto, and lost much of your precious time which God hath lent you to prepare for the grave. Upon the improvement of your present time doth your eternal happiness depend, and if it be squandered away, what will become of your immortal and never dying souls? If a man hath much work to do, work of the weightiest concern that must be done, or the man undone: business that would take up all his day, and it should so fall out that he had lost the morning, nay above half his day; would it not concern him to set about the work with all his might, so as if possible to do two hours works in one; lest the Sun go down before the work is finished.

nished. *Redeem the time, because the days are evil*, Eph. 5. 16. Alas Sirs, are not the shadows of the evening upon some of you? the Lord help you to lay it to heart. Do not think the whole work of your lives can be done upon a Dying Bed. Oh consider Old age is unfit for labour, and it is folly with a witness to think 'tis time enough to sow when thou shouldest reap. Delays proves the ruin of many thousands; *The night cometh*, saith Christ, *when no man can work*.

10. And lastly, Consider what will become of your precious souls, if death take you before you are ready; for it will not stay for you. Will he be bribed or perswaded to come another time? I remember a young Maid in the Countrey that was sick, and as she grew near her end, she cried out to be spared one quarter of a year, one month; but when that would not be granted, ra-

rather than fail, one week: but die she did, greedy death will have no denial. Oh what a sad sight is it to see a Christless soul a dying! When death sits upon your trembling lips, and you not prepared, what would you give for peace and pardon then? When pale death comes upon thee like a sturdy Sergeant, and doth arrest thee in the name of the great King of Heaven and Earth, he will hale you along; to prison you must go. Death comes upon a wicked man like a hungry Lyon, tearing their souls from their bodies; to such he is indeed the King of Terrors: He comes on them like a fiery Serpent, with his venemous sting; with which he wounds them and lays them a bleeding to all Eternity. Oh to have the soul dragged out of the body and cast into hell; is of a dreadful and amazing Consideration. With this I shall conclude the Use of Exhortation.

The

The next is an uſe of Direction to poor ſinners and all others that would be prepared for the grave, if this be ſo.

Firſt, Doth not ſome poor ſoul hear ſay, Oh what ſhall I do that I may be prepared for the grave? Have you a heart, a mind, a deſire indeed to be fitted for that hour? Then in the firſt place labour to get a full ſight and ſenſe of your ſins, and of your loſt and undone condition by nature. Oh what a miſerable creature hath ſin made man, or rather man by ſin made himſelf? That muſt needs be the greateſt evil, that deprives man of the greateſt good. God is mans chief good, ſin deprives man of this good; ſin makes man hated of God, and cauſeth man to reſemble Satan; who is the oppoſite of God. The carnal mind is enmity againſt God, this enmity muſt be removed, *Unleſs*

leſs a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God, John 3. 3.

Secondly, Labour to get Brokenneſs of heart, oh ſtrive to melt in the ſight and ſenſe of your iniquity. Sinner what haſt thou done, wilt thou ſin away thy mercies, ſin away thy Miniſters? Gods hand is lifted up, we are under ſore rebukes of the Almighty, though I fear few are ſenſible that it is the fruit of their tranſgreſſions. May we not ſay with the Prophet, *No man repenteth him of his wickedneſs, ſaying, What have I done?* Jer. 8. 6. God expects and looks for tears of Repentance, *A broken and a contrite heart is a ſacrifice that he will not deſpiſe.* If you are not broken in the ſenſe of the odious and abominable nature of ſin, broken into pieces now, you are like to be broken with horror under the weight of the puniſhment hereafter. Oh! Is it not better to be ſmitten and broken in a way

way of mercy, in order to healing; then to be broken in a way of wrath and judgement, when there will be no help nor cure for you.

Thirdly, Labour to get an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt. Oh that this opportunity might have ſome tendency this way! *Unleſs ye believe that I am he*, ſaith *Jeſus Chriſt*, *you ſhall die in your ſins.* Soul never reſt and be ſatisfied, till thou canſt ſay with *Thomas*, *My Lord and my God*, John 20. 28. Can you ſtill ſtand it out againſt ſuch precious patience and offers of grace? Will you not yet open to Chriſt? Shall he call and cry to you and will you give him no entertainment? Can you cloſe in with a better friend? How long hath he ſtood knocking at the doors of your hearts? Was he not graciouſly calling upon you the laſt Lords day? and now in mercy he is giving you another knock. Oh

fear leſt he depart! Is he not ready to take his farewel of you? Have you not let him ſtand till his *head was wet with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night?* Sinner, ſinner, haſten to him, and open the door, do'ſt not hear that lovely voice that was ſpoken to the blind man, *Be of good comfort, riſe, he calleth thee*, Mark 10. 49. It may be you will ask where? I'll tell thee, if thou art a weary and burdened ſoul, that feeleſt the weight of thy ſin, there is a precious word ſpoken for thy ſake, take hold of it; *Matth.* 11. 28. *Come unto me all you that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you reſt; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and you ſhall find reſt for your ſouls.* Oh the ſweetneſs of that word, take it and receive it down.

Fourthly, Labour in the ſtrength of Chriſt to oppoſe every ſin. See that there be no ſweet moiſel hid, no

no *Dalilah*, no pleaſant nor profitable luſt ſpared. O cry with *David*, *Search me, O Lord, and try my heart; prove me, and know my thoughts*; *Pſal.* 139. 23.

Fifthly, Take heed you do not ſin againſt Light. Neglect no Conviction either of Sin or Duty, if you would be prepared for the grave: *Then ſhall I not*, ſaith *David*, *be aſhamed, when I have reſpect to all thy commandments*; Pſal. 119. 6.

Sixthly, Never be ſatisfied until you have all your ſins ſubdued. Sin muſt be crucified, or the ſoul muſt die, *Rom.* 8. 13. To this I might add (for I cannot enlarge) make it your buſineſs alſo to get your ſins pardoned; ſo that you may have the feeling ſenſe of the forgiveneſs of them in your own hearts.

Seventhly, Labour after a pure Conſcience. What will ſtand your ſouls in greater ſtead, when you come to die than this? *Paul's* great care and endeavour was, to keep a *Conſcience void of offence towards God and toward men*, Acts 24. 16. I muſt tell you, An accuſing Conſcience will be a bad Death-bed Companion. I remember what our dear Friend ſpake to me in the time of his Sickneſs. *Oh Brother*, ſaid he, *a good conſcience is the beſt refuge.* That was his rejoycing, alluding to that Text, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *the teſtimony of his conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God he had his converſation in the world.* It matters not who reproach us, if Conſcience doth not? Conſcience, as I told ſome of you lately, will be your beſt friend, if a friend, a friend indeed, a friend in adverſity; a friend at death, and a

friend

friend in the day of judgement: Oh what would some men give for such a friend? But if Conſtience be an enemy, he is the worſt of enemies. Conſcience is a ſecret enemy, an enemy that is privy to all we have done; he knows all our thoughts, yea thoſe ſecret luſts and evils, that lie in our hearts; and he will not be flattered. He will tell the truth and all the truth. Conſcience will lay all open in the dreadful day of Account before Angels and Men, *Rom.* 2. 15. Holy *Job* reſolved to hold his integrity faſt and not to let it go; his heart ſhould not reproach him as long as he lived, *Job* 27. 5, 6. Sincerity of heart and a good conſcience will be a good ſanctuary at the hour of death. The Lord help you to lay theſe things to heart. I might give you more directions which I am forced to omit, becauſe of time. Onely this, if thou wouldſt be prepared for the grave, take this one, which was

not

not then delivered; which I am sorry I did omit.

Eighthly, Beware of resting in the form of godliness without the power. 'Tis an easie thing to conform to the outward part of Religion; to take up Ordinances and come into Churches: but oh what will become of the foolish Virgins. Sinners in *Zion* ere long will be afraid, and fearfulness will surprize the hypocrites. Many of you heard those excellent soul-searching Sermons of your dear Pastor now deceased on 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

Oh that you would labour to call them to mind! and those upon a well-ordered Conversation; from *Psal.* 50. and the last verse. What pains did he take with you, that you might not deceive your selves and miss at last of eternal life? I think there was never more formality amongst Christians and carnality amongst Professors in the Churches, than in these dayes: No marvel if God bring a day of dreadful tryals and afflictions upon us, that those that are approved, may be made manifest. Tremble sinners, for God is a coming forth to refine his people; *he will search* Jerusalem *with candles*; Zeph. 1. 12. And woe to them that are at ease in *Zion*; however you appear now to men, your sins ere long will find you out.

I now must come to the third Use, which must be an Use of Lamentation; and indeed I know not well how to enter upon it, my heart is full. Is it so? Must all die? Can

none

none deliver their own ſouls from the power of the grave? Muſt Husbands die, dear Husbands? Muſt Fathers die, yea tender Fathers? Muſt Friends, our deareſt Friends die? Miniſters, nay, our choice and godly Paſtors, muſt they die too? Oh greedy Death! oh cruel Tirant! Oh that ever we ſinned! This may well be for a Lamentation. *Samuel* died, and *Iſrael* made great Lamentations for him. Your *Samuel* is gone, but no asking for him again, he cannot come. In *Acts* 8. 2. it is ſaid *Devout men carried* Stephen *to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.*

O ſpare me a little, you have loſt one who laboured to do the work of his generations in faithfulneſs. Let me lay down ſome grounds that we have for a Lamentation.

1. Oh

1. Oh it's grievous to loose a godly Preacher, a Pastor, a faithful Labourer. 'Tis a day of Mourning, my soul as well as yours is full. Alas there is but few of them! We have need of more, and Lord do'st thou take away these we have?

2. But if any should say we have many yet left behind, I must say not many such, who make it their main work and business to bring souls to Jesus Christ. There are but few who naturally care for the Flock: Few preach Christ for Christs sake, that are willing to spend and be spent for his Name sake; like our dear Brother, now with the Lord. May I not say with *Paul*, some preach Christ out of envy, and some of strife; onely with this variation, Are there not many who preach Jesus Christ not sincerely, but have self and sinister ends at the bottom. But to leave

that,

that, however, if God proceed and go on after this rate to take our Preachers away, there will be few enough ere long.

3. You have not onely loſt a Paſtor, a Shepherd, a tender one, but you have loſt a Father. Many of you muſt follow your Father this day to the grave. You have many Inſtructors in Chriſt, yet not many Fathers. He hath been an Inſtrument through the Word and the operation of the Spiri in his Miniſtry, to beget many of you to Jeſus Chriſt. May you not cry out with *Eliſha* when *Elijah* was taken up from him, *My father, my father, the horſemen of Iſrael and the chariots thereof; and he ſaw him no more*, 2 Kings 2. 12. He is now gone, you will hear him no more, ſee him no more. This golden Trumpet is now ſtopped, you will hear it ſound no more.

4. Consider the time in which God hath taken him away, when the harvest is white, or when the fields are ripe to harvest; when many sinners are ready to be brought in to Jesus Christ. The loss is great, oh how shall it be repaired? How shall the harvest be gathered in, when the chief Labourer in this field is gone?

5. Ministers are and fitly may be compared to Pilots; the Church to a Ship passing through a troublesome Ocean, amongst many Rocks and Sands; and when such die, how shall the poor Marriners steer, especially, considering the dangerous and grievous stormes that do now appear: is not this a ground of lamentation?

6. Ministers are compared to Shepheards, that are to keep the flock and watch over them to take

care

care of the tender lambs; and let me tell you, ravenous wolves are abroad, yea and the cunning Fox, nay as crafty Foxes as ever were in the world; and the Shepherd being gone, may we not fear that which will follow; is not the flock in danger to be scattered.

7. Ministers of the Gospel may be compared to Captains, to encourage us in our spiritual warfare, and now alas your Leader is gone, he is taken from you, and are we not surrounded with enemies? May we not say with *Leah* in another case, *Gen.* 30, 11. *a troop cometh*, a troop of troubles, a troop of afflictions, a troop of temptations, a troop of miseries and persecutions; I wish it prove not a troop of division to the scattering of us: the Lord I hope will prevent it.

8. Ministers of the Gospel are compared to Trees, *the trees of the Lord*

are full of sap, Psal. 104. 16. *the lip of the righteous feed many* (saith *Solomon*; and this was a fruitful tree. Oh the sweet fruit it did bear, most precious fruit it yielded us for many years. Oh what good have many gathered out of the branches thereof. But now alas it is (*cut down*) it will bear fruit for you no more, you shall hear him pray no more, preach no more; and is not this a ground of lamentation.

9. Saints and Ministers of the Gospel are the interest of the Nation, City, or Place where they live. Was not *Lot* the interest of *Sodom*? *I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither*, Gen. 19. 22. Till *Lot* was gone, fire and brimstone could not come upon that miserable City. Oh what love hath God to the poor Preachers of righteousness. But again, Was not *Jacob* the interest of *Labans* family?

ly? How did God bless him for *Jacobs* sake? The like might be minded of *Joseph* to the *Egyptians*. Ye, saith our blessed Saviour, *are the light of the world and the salt of the earth*. To whom did he speak but to his Disciples, his holy Apostles, that he sent forth to preach glad tydings of great joy unto the Nations. I might shew you wherein they are the interest of the place where they are, but I must hasten: Take onely two or three brief hints.

1. They stand in the gap or in the breach. Ours is a great one, the Lord look upon us. They plead with God: When *Moses* hands are up *Israel* prevails, and when he lets down his hands *Amalek* prevails, *Exod.* 17. 11. Oh how doth he cry out for a provoking generation. When *Jehovah* cries, *Let me alone, that I may destroy them, Exod.* 32, 10. *Oh*, saith *Joshua*,

Joshua, what wilt thou do for thy great name? If thou wilt not forgive their sin, saith *Moses, blot me out of thy Book.* Nay, though God promised to make of him a great Nation, yet he still lifts up a cry for them, *Exod.* 32. 10, 11, 32.

2. They are the interest of the Nation where they are, by counselling, warning, and admonishing.

3. By their holy and exemplary conversations. *Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as* Sodom *and should have been like unto* Gomorrah, *Isa.* 1. 9.

10. Ground of Lamentation, is because sin usually is the cause why God removes his faithful Embassadors. He sends to treat with sinners about the concerns of their souls. I wish this stroke be not in judgement to some of your souls. The Mes-

Meſſage they bring is often ſlighted, and thereby ſinners ſlight and reject the King himſelf. They cry and lift up their voice like a trumpet, fore-warning of danger; but none lays it to heart. They ſpend their ſtrength and weaken their bodies for the good of ſinners ſouls; but ſinners ſlight it; Nay, if they ſhould ſweat drops of blood it would not do, it would not work in them remorſe of Conſcience and repentance unto life. Well, ſaith God, now I'll wait upon thee no more, him that you deſpiſed and contemned, or neglected to hear, or whoſe counſel you did not regard, you ſhall hear no more. The taking away of faithful Preachers is one of the greateſt juggements that can come upon ſinners. But alas, it may not only be for the ſins of the ungodly world upon unconverted ſinners, but a puniſhment upon Profeſſors and Church Members for their iniquity; they may not prize

the

the mercy nor walk worthy of the bleſſing. They may not carry it as they ought to do to the Labourer that is amongſt them: They may grieve and wound his heart by their diſorderly walking; and God may from hence be provoked to take him a way. Nay they may on the other hand overvalue him, they may idolize their Teachers and look upon them above what is meet; though ſinful, yet 'tis poſſible to eye man more than God by man. God may remove them. Upon this account the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome that had mens perſons in admiration. I am ſatisfied there is too great extreams in the world. We ſhould have a care we do not receive the Truth for the ſake of a man, or to pleaſe men, becauſe ſuch and ſuch ſays it; but out of Love to Jeſus Chriſt, and becauſe God hath commanded it. Beloved, it may not be amiſs to lay theſe things to heart, 'tis good to hear

the

the Rod and to know who it is, and for what it is appointed. I do not charge any in particular.

II. And lastly, Here is cause of lamentation, because evil and dark dayes many times follows the removal of Gods Worthies. When God takes away so many faithful ones, what may we expect to look for. I might give divers instances of the sad effects, or what hath followed the taking godly persons & sincere Labourers away*. But I am afraid I have been too tedious already, remember what the

*Mr. *Clark* gives us several instances how the death of the righteous hath been the Harbinger of sad and lamentable Judgements. Begins with *Methuselah* before the Flood, whose very name was very significant upon this account. Also I lately met with a Sermon of a godly Minister in *New England* that was preached sometimes before their late calamities and miseries broke forth there, and amongst their other signs of approaching judgement, that he seemed to be very apprehensive of, he minds that of the dropping away of many holy and godly persons. 'Oh how many able and godly preachers and others have we lost in a short space? We may look upon it as one sad sign or symptome of approaching evil.

Prophet ſaith, *The righteous periſheth, and no man layeth it to heart; Merciful men are taken away; and none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.* Iſa. 57. 1.

Thus much by way of Lamentation and Conſolation.

I have onely one Uſe more, which ſhall be in the fourth place by way of Comfort and Conſolation.

1. Muſt all dye, the godly as well as the wicked? Is the Grave the place prepared for all Living? Muſt Fathers, Husbands, Wives, Children, Miniſters, and the deareſt Friends we have dye? How ſhall we then comfort our ſelves againſt death? If thou art a Beleiver, I have a word of comfort for thee; there is none I am ſure for Chriſtleſs Souls.

2. Con-

1. Consider death cannot hurt thee; it cannot hurt those that are Believers, because it hath lost his sting. Death may hiss but cannot hurt: Nothing makes death terrible to an ungodly man but it's Sting. *The sting of death is sin*, but this is taken away from Believers by Jesus Christ. *Oh death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?* 1 Cor. 15. 55, 56.

2. Death cannot hurt a Believer, because it cannot bring an annihilation of the body, though it bring an alteration upon the state and condition of the body, yea and though the body be dissolved to dust, yet it shall not be lost, it shall rise to life again.

3. Death cannot dissolve or break that blessed union there is between Jesus Christ and believers. Though it may separate soul and body, yet it cannot separate either

from Jesus Christ, and the soul immediately will be in a more glorious enjoyment of Christ; and though the body for a while must lie in the grave, yet that dust is precious dust in Christs sight.

4. Consider Death cannot keep the body long under its power, nor keep soul and body apart; 'tis but a little while and they will meet again. Death and the Grave are conquered enemies. Saints by faith can now, through Jesus Christ triumph over them, and shall have a compleat, a full Conquest, over a short space.

5. Death has not power to cast into hell, if Conscience condemns thee not, if the Word convicts thee not, if God passeth not the Sentence upon thee, Death has no power to do it. Death can but bring to the grave, 'tis sin that casteth the soul into hell.

6. Con-

6. Conſider Death is thine, that is, 'twill be for thy profit and advantage every way. Remember that ſweet word of *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Whether* Paul *or* Apollo, *or* Cephas, *or life, or death, or things preſent, or things to come, all are yours*; it will be every way for thy good. Conſider what freedom thou wilt gain thereby. 1. It will free thee from a body of ſin and death, that often makes thee go with a ſorrowful heart. Oh! hath it not oft made thee to cry out with St. *Paul*, *Oh wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſin and death?* Oh what is a greater trouble to a Child of God than indwelling ſin? He cannot do the things he would do. But now comes death and frees thee of all theſe ſoul perplexities and diſquietments. Sin makes a Saint to groan, being burthened; but now thou ſhalt grieve Chriſt and his ſpirit,

nor

nor thy own ſoul no more: Is not this that a poor Saint longs for?

2. 'Twill free thee from a poor crazy, diſeaſed, or diſtempered Body. There will then be no crying out of back or bone, nor head nor heart any more; 'twill be with thee as with the Church in the glorious day to come, *Rev.* 21. 4. *There ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow, nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain; for the former things are paſſed away.*

3. It will free thee from an evil and wicked world. Oh what a defiling, enſnaring, and bewitching world is this? What hinders us of our joy and peace in Chriſt more than it? What greater vexation to us? Oh how many precious Saints are clogged and impriſoned by the cares of the world, which many times is ready to choak the ſeed of holy deſires after Chriſt: But by

y Death thou ſhalt be delivered.

4. It will free thee out of the hands of perſecutors. Thou wilt, (with our dear Brother) be out of their reach then: they ſhall not diſquiet thee, impriſon thee, nor torment thee any more. *There*, ſaith *Job* (ſpeaking of the grave) *the wicked ceaſe from troubling; and there the weary be at reſt; there the priſoners reſt together, they hear not the voice of the oppreſſor*, Job 3. 17, 18.

5. Death will free thee from an envious raging and tempting Devil. He will have no more power to diſturb thee, accuſe thee, nor by his curſed ſuggeſtions, to vex and perplex thy ſoul; no, nor any other ways to hurt or annoy thee. O will not this be to thy great advantage? Who would be unwilling to die, that hath an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt?

6. Thou

6. Thou wilt hereby alſo be freed from all the diſcords and troubles that riſe amongſt Brethren. The unworthy and diſorderly lives of Profeſſors ſhall ſadden thy heart then no more. This was that which worried and grieved the bleſſed Apoſtle, *Phil.* 3. 18. Our dear Brother is ſet at liberty from all theſe things, diſorders in the Church, no looſe walking of Members thereof, will burden nor trouble him again.

7. Nay and Death will free thee of all that trouble that riſeth from thoſe inward becloudings and hideings of God's face. It will never be night with the ſoul any more; thou wilt then be with Chriſt and behold his face with joy for ever.

8. And laſtly, Thou wilt alſo be freed of all thy toilſome pains and labour, of what nature ſoever it be.

O how good is reſt to a weary ſoul? *Bleſſed are the dead which die in the Lord, yea, ſaith the Spirit, that they may reſt from their labours, and their works do follow them*, Rev. 14. 13.

But then once again, Conſider what a bleſſed ſtate thy ſoul will be in at death. If thou art a true believer, thou ſhalt not onely have hereby a negative good, it will not ſimply be a freedom from all thoſe ſorrows and troubles thou haſt heard, but thy ſoul ſhall immediately receive tranſcendent joy with Jeſus Chriſt. *For me to live*, ſaith *Paul*, *is Chriſt*, *and to die is gain.* The advantage the ſoul receives upon this account, made *Paul* ſo much deſire to depart and be with Chriſt; which he ſays is far better, *Phil.* 1. 21. Pray obſerve his words, he doth not ſay it will be gain to him when he riſes again, no, but *to die*

is gain *. I shall receive more joy, more consolation, more of the fulness of God and Christ (as if he should say) when I die, then I can whilest I am in this body.

* Some probably may object the dead are not sensible of time, 'tis but as a sleep to them; they die and their resurrection to them immediately follows; no distance of time between Death and Judgement to the dead, and so *Paul*'s gain he speaks of, might not be till the resurrection?

Answ. Though it be granted death to the body is but as a sleep, yet 'tis not so to the soul. But that this is not the intent or meaning of the Apostle, is plain; which I make out thus: *Paul* plainly shews that if he did presently depart or die, it would be gain to him; now if that which you say were true, he would have lost by death, 'tis easie to see how. Suppose he might live twenty or thirty years longer on earth, would not thirty years sweet enjoyment of Jesus Christ be worth nothing? Is not one day with God, beholding his lovely face, better than a thousand? All know, that if he died presently, he should never the sooner obtain the resurrection of this body, than if he had lived a hundred years longer; this being well weighed, to die presently would have been his great loss, were not the soul in a present enjoyment of Christ at death.

Mind that passage in 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *For we know that if our earthly house*

houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, a houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Compare this with ver. 6. *Therefore we are alwayes confident, knowing that whilſt we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord.* The Apoſtle doth not ſay we know when this earthly houſe is broken down and raiſed up again, we have a building with God, eternal in the heavens. (Pray conſider it) but plainly when it is diſſolved, when it is turned to its duſty crums: (*We have*) that is our ſouls, he can intend nothing elſe. By (*we*) he means their better part, which he compares to an inhabiter, and the body to the houſe or tabernacle in which it dwels. Oh what an excellent thing is the ſoul of man over the body.

And now beloved, That the ſoul or better part is capable of being ſeparated from the body, and in

its ſeparate ſtate from the body, capable of glorious enjoyments of God and high raptures of joy with Jeſus Chriſt, doth appear moſt evident from that paſſage of the Apoſtle in 2 *Cor.* 12. 1, 2, 3. *It is not expedient for me doubtleſs, to glory, I will come to viſions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Chriſt above fourteen years ago, whether in the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth: ſuch a one caught up to the third heaven.* ver. 4. ſays, *he was caught up into paradiſe, and heard unſpeakable words, which is not lawful for a man to utter.* The ſoul or ſpirit then it appears may be ſeparate from the body. I from this place thus argue,

1. If the ſoul or ſpirit of man be not capable of being ſeparated from the houſe of clay or earthly tabernacle, then *Paul* might have boldly and ſafely have ſaid the whole man was taken up, a ſoul and body

body together, and not one without the other, because it is impossible to separate them: but since *Paul* says he knows not whether in the body or out of the body, he plainly shews what opinion he was of.

And then secondly, I may from what he says, reason after this manner, *viz.* If the soul in its separated state from the body, be not able or capable to enjoy or take in heavenly comforts or consolations of Jesus Christ, *Paul* might boldly and positively have said he was taken up in the body, because however he was caught up, whether within or without the body, he heard and saw unexpressible things; he had high and soul-filling raptures of joy. The Lord Jesus promised the penitent Thief that he should (that is his chief or better part) be that day with him in Paradice. *Lord Jesus* (saith *Stephen*) *receive my spirit.*

ſpirit. O what a bleſſed thing it is to die in Chriſt? O what a happy eſtate is our dear friend in, the gain is exceeding great. Some may ſay what doth a godly man gain by death?

I anſwer, Firſt, They gain a glorious place, heaven, the glorious Paradice of God, the Manſions of glory that are in our Fathers Houſe! Who is able to conceive what a glorious place heaven is? But then,

Secondly, They ſhall enjoy glorious company too. They ſhall be with Jeſus Chriſt, have his company, *in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there be pleaſures for evermore*; be with Chriſt, holy Angels, and glorious ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. O what a bleſſed ſtate and condition of ſoul have they gained that are gone thither!

Third-

Thirdly, We ſhall gain ſweet peace. 'Tis not onely peace in Chriſt (that Gods people have as their portion here) but it ſhall be peace with Chriſt. A Woman that has a dear Husband, who is gone to Sea, he is it may be in another Country, yet ſhe hears from him, receives tokens of love, ſhe has much ſatisfaction of the ſtedfaſtneſs of his love, cordialneſs of his affection; in this ſhe has peace and comfort, but alas what is this peace to that when he comes home, when ſhe has him, enjoys his company? O we ſhall ſee Chriſt, enjoy him, reſt in his arms to all eternity. *Enter thou*, ſaith Chriſt, *into the joy of thy Lord.* That joy is too much to enter into us, therefore we muſt enter into that. *Mark the perfect man and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* He has peace in death, peace beyond death,

death, yea and peace to all eternity!

And now one word more particularly to you that have loſt your Paſtor: Your loſs I muſt confeſs is great (though he hath gained hereby) and it may be ſome of you are crying out, What ſhall we do? Beloved, you muſt labour for a quiet frame, ſtrive for contentedneſs of heart; 'tis the Lords hand upon you, 'tis what he has done; remember *David*, *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*, Pſal. 39. 9.

2. Conſider alſo your loſs is not ſo great, but God is able to repair it and make it up to you, though you may not ſee which way it can be done, let it be your care to wait upon God; cry to him, look up to the Lord of the Harveſt, and patiently wait to ſee what he will do for you.

3. To

3. To ſupport you under this ſore affliction, Conſider the great Shepherd of the Sheep never dyes, he lives for ever; and ſure he that dyed for the Sheep whoſe own Sheep they are, will take care of them; he will feed them and preſerve them from danger, *Iſa.* 23. 1, 2, 3. *The Lord is my Shepherd,* ſaith *David, I ſhall not want: He maketh me to lie down in green Paſtures: he leadeth me beſides the ſtill waters: he reſtoreth my Soul: he leadeth me in the paths of Righteouſneſs, for his Names ſake.* And from hence he takes courage, *Yea, though I walk thorow the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil.* Oh what a bleſſed thing it is to have confidence in God, and to have ſuch a Shepherd; the keeper of *Iſrael* never ſlumbers nor ſleepeth.

And now to conclude one word to dear Relations, and to comfort us all under the preſent diſpenſation.

1. Conſider death ſhall not ſeperate us long, we ſhall ſee one another again over a ſhort time, he is gone but a little before; let us think upon that glorious Meeting we ſhall have ere long in the Air, read 1 *Theſ.* 4.13,&c. *I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are aſleep, that ye ſorrow not, even as others which have no hope; for if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe*

roſe again; even ſo them which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him: for this we ſay unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep: for the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven with a ſhout, with the voice of the Arch-angel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt, then we which are alive and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and ſo ſhall we ever be with the Lord: wherefore comfort one another with

theſe words. What can I ſpeak that may be more ſeaſonable for comfort, then that which the holy Spirit hath left upon record, upon that very account it will be but a little while and we ſhall ſee him again, we ſhall have a joyful meeting and never part more.

O therefore be quieted, conſider what you have heard what death is to a Believer.

Shall not our Friend go to reſt? Alas he hath laboured hard, and O how ſweet is this reſt to him. When a man

man hath worked hard all day and wearied himſelf, how willing is he to go to bed at night? Alas he is but gone to ſleep, to take ſweet and quiet reſt until the Morning.

2. Shall not we be willing he ſhould have inlargement to be freed out of Priſon. Alas our Souls are as it were but in Priſon whilſt we dwell here below. in theſe Houſes of Clay; Death as a Porter opens a door into that Glorious Palace above He is but gone home to his Fathers Houſe, and how earneſt was he to depart, that he

he might be present with the Lord.

3. Shall not he eat the fruit of his labour, he that soweth in tears shall reap in joy, those that go forth weeping bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoycing and bring their Sheaves with them.

4. He having overcome, shall not he receive the Crown? *Paul* having fought the good fight of faith, knew there was laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness: *To him that overcometh*, saith our Saviour, *will I grant to*

sit

ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne, Rev. 3. 21.

5. And now in the laſt place and to ſhut up all, conſider, uncertain is thy life, and mind; you know not but that in a very few dayes you may go after, it will not be long be ſure, and thither we all muſt go: For, *What man is he, that liveth and ſhall not ſee death? Shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.*

FINIS

ERATA.

PAg. 4. l. 9. blot forth *out*, p. 4 l 10. alſo blot forth *out*, p 9. l. 25 for *is* read *it*, p. 11. l. 14. blot out *word*, p. 15. for *Auguſtus Cæſar* r. *JuliusCæſar*, p 17. l. 2. for *if* r. *of*, p. 18. for *queſtion* r. *query*, p. 32. l. 8. blot out *And*, p. 32. l. 9. for *And* r. *For*, p. 58. l. 8. blot out *and Conſolation*, which eſcaped in ſ me Copies.